



my leaves

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You Were Never Supposed to Know It

LeAnne Gray

It all happened in a moment
A bird flew for the first time

Taking its flight over countless
Trees of death and some green

And right before I knew the moment
It was taken from me—Along with
My innocence...

You know the moment I speak of
The moment you so willingly stumble upon
The moment you are never supposed to know
The moment in which the ultimate test lies and
you fail.

A moment you were warned about
A moment you anxiously feared

A moment only death can comfort.



Dixie Holton

Achilles Heel

47" x 52"

Acrylic on Canvas

Once in a Lifetime

Brandy Caldwell

We immediately connected
His eyes stared at me from across the room
I looked back a second, third, fourth, and fifth time
His eyes never moved
As he introduced himself, his story captivated my attention

I was definitely aware that his eyes were intently fixed
on my every word
But I spoke without care or concern
There was so much freedom in our conversation
We told our histories of family let downs
That left us strong and independent
And sometimes too self reliant
He understood how I could miss my father
Because he only knew his mother for two years, but didn't say why
His surprise ending abruptly stated, "I'm in love with someone."
"Me too," I said and that was it.

Who knew that three years later we would find each other again
And it would be the most spontaneous and exhilarating
week of my life
At one local Irish Pub he said, "I'm going to walk away.
When I return it will be as if we just met."
He left the table and rushed back in frantically
searching the restaurant
Until our eyes met and he slowly and confidently made
his way back to me,
"Dance with me," he said, and his notion was just
crazy enough to do it.
Thereafter, the table next to ours began to clap and cheer
While one man wiped away a tear with his shirt sleeve

I like to think of our first and last kiss goodbye
It was almost invisible; the split second before he boarded the bus
Now his eyes shine like stars far away from my knowing
My heart called his name in our beginning existence

He smiled at me then and continues to hold this wand over me
In a trance I float with him as I am held in his sight
If only he could come to this place I call forever paradise
A wish would be so sweet, but could never compare to
his strawberry touch
And the glistening ears that truly hear me

Oscillating Fan

Anthony Gonzalez

Still in his quiet corner,
yearning for a hot day
to perform his act of nature,
no longer dormant but awake.

His long neck still stands tall,
but after years of off and on,
it's tilted towards my window,
like a sunflower towards the sun.

His blades swiftly saw the air,
with a pleasant, soothing fury.
He helps me fall asleep at night,
it's really his only duty.

It was cold without him this night,
the tenth month unusually frigid,
I got in bed, the alarm went on,
but he was one who didn't.



Alise Wilkins
Untitled
5" x 7"
Photograph

Personal Belongings

Tricia Tyndall

I suppose he wanted to make the proposal something she'd never forget.

He wanted to fly with her to New York and go ice-skating at Rockefeller Square

and then ask her while the snow fell after a carriage ride in Central Park.

She probably had an idea of what was coming but would try to act surprised.

But he must have been surprised when he reached into his coat pocket and didn't find the ring.

Maybe he remembered that she had her hands on his chest on the plane, and he didn't want

her to feel the jewelry box, so he must have sneaked it into the seat pocket in front of them.

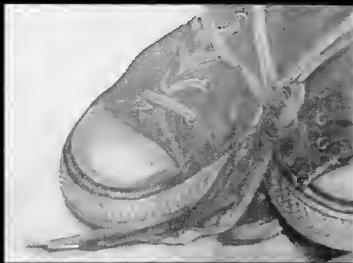
He should have paid attention when the flight attendant announced to check the

seat pockets for all personal belongings that may have been left behind.

Transplanting Irises

Margaret B. Hayes

There's something familial
about the way Irises cling
together,
holding onto each other
like children holding hands.
They need transplanting,
but something bothers me,
for when I pull them from
the soft dark earth,
ghost-white roots
like bloodless fingers,
hang on desperately.
Shocked for a moment,
I pull back
feeling guilty,
then walk away,
remembering what it's like,
leaving home.



Hanna Kozlowski

Sincerity is the Essence of Friendship

14" x 23"

Graphite on paper



Stacy Adams

Untitled

34" x 28"

Oil on Canvas

Swing
Shannon Griffin

The great A stretches across the slate,
Its mirror image hovering above
It in full color. A little girl's shadow
Falls into it. Her legs straighten out.

With her hair blowing in the breeze
And her fists tightly clinched around
Two silver chains, she holds her breath.
She prepares for another climb to the top

Where she looks down on all she left,
But she's careful not to focus on it too long.
She is enjoying where she is now, soaring high
Against a perfect blue.

Her voice echoes in the wind.
She spreads out her arms,
Letting the breeze pass through
Her fingers. Suddenly, she is pulled back

Down again like a great pendulum
Touching every point on the arc,
Before taking off again into the world
She only halfway knows.



Rebecca Shaw

Untitled

36" x 28

Oil on Canvas

Nantahala
Ada Ezeokoli

Bronze leaves glide
through the frigid air
to the surfaces of this
rustling green silk spread
they call the Nantahala.
A kingfisher heads upstream,
its blue wings in sharp
contrast to the bare trees
pasted against gray clouds.
The rush of the river echoes
through the morning mist
as we trek down the shore.
Nantahala is singing.
I remember a river like this,
where the teenage girls
in their multicolored wraps
fetch water in huge clay jars
they balance on their heads.
The trees on that river's bank
are laden with udalas,
the clouds white as blouses
washer-women lay out
on rocks to be sun-bleached.
I remember the surge of water
against my bare brown feet
as my hands sought out pebbles
in the river's shallow bed.
I can still hear Mama singing
as she washed our clothes
against the face of a boulder
worn smooth from years of
the scrubbing hands of women
who sang by the river before.
I remember the river's song,
and it lures me back to Nantahala,
her churning rapids crashing
into the silent, rigid boulders.
The kingfisher's raucous cry
echoes through this cold valley
as we paddle our raft backwards
into the tunnel of leaves.

Mountain Woman Blues

Maghan A. Lusk

Her body is gnarled, twisted, and woody,
she is made of hard lines, hard facts, her mouth
is rigid as a splinter, her jowls sag like the planks
in the seat of an old rocking chair.

Cradled upon her bosom,
babes, men, have been soothed into manhood
on the crescendos of bluegrass lullabies
and the mandolin beating between each heavy breast;

she knits her world into the patches of a quilt
that drapes, a treasure map across her knees,
a birth here, a death to yellow fever there,
and her own mother's legacy of casting out demons
with bitterroot tonic and faith healing;

the body, flecked with age, recedes like
moonshine from a communal bottle,
falling back, back, back,
into the rocking chair passed down through generations.



Amber Dumas
Untitled
12 1/4" x 19 5/8"
Charcoal on Paper



Robbie Cobb
Typographic Self-portrait
11"x 17"
Illustrator CS

Family Vacation

Marissa Sullivan

"We'll drive at night," my father said.

"They'll sleep through that way."

But ten miles before crossing Alabama's state line,
I woke up and pressed my forehead against the cool glass.

I counted 43 rebar crosses
In the last four miles of the state,

Tracing each one in the fog of my small breath,
Careful not to let my finger squeak against the wet glass.

The smaller crosses were almost hidden,
Secrets buried beneath the too-steep berm,

While the moon cast shadows of the larger ones
Into the middle of the road.

"My God," my mother said after a Semi shook
Past our car and we passed number 12.

She glanced at my father
And then forward again.

"Probably all the damn drunk Indians,"
He finally said after number 31.

"Choctaws or Creeks maybe."
My mother nodded, satisfied.

One mile past 43, and two minutes before sunrise,
I lay back down and waited for the beach,

But flashing on the back of my eyelids
Were white crosses,

And Indians scattered on dawn's highway
Bleeding.

Ryan's Room

In the hallway, I touch the cold door with my fingers
Pushing it open to enter a whole other time,

Ally Queen

This secret, untouched room—
Football trophies and model cars—

That have been abruptly frozen in time
Like a pond's surface in the dead of winter.
Not that I think
If he were still here today

That we would never fuss and fight,
Or get along like perfect siblings,
Knowing his favorite color or type of car,
Or that we would be the best of friends

And remain together every moment
A timeless team, The Carpenters
Singing together through life's mysteries and trials,
Knowing the other will always be there

It's just the way his senior picture sits
On his night chest,
How his letter jacket falls across his chair,
Everything still the way he left it

Collecting dust year after year...
And I'll never hear his laugh,
Or know the way he smelled when we hugged,
Although my parents have that great advantage...

So, I often sneak up to his room and try to remember
Then I turn around taking just one last look,
Leaving the room I also leave Ryan,
Frozen in time and in my mind since the day he left.



Alicia Marquez

Kareef

32" x 40"

Charcoal on Conservaboard



Brian Burrell
i-procrastinate.
t-shirt design

Communion

Maghan A. Lusk

As we stood, our two faces illuminating
The pages and your voice like a
Victrola throwing poetic static
Through foggy kitchen air, Sharon Olds'
Words never sounded so beautiful,
So like a locket being opened to reveal
A sweetheart—your love of language,
This language that did not come from fields
Where you picked cotton, a thick-haired,
Shoeless child; not as a mother of five, divorced,
Working your salvation out on the loom
To make tapestries of others' opportunities;
You dreamed in metaphor and those bourgeois
Words your children never cared to learn,
Nor did they care for the fire in your soul
That spoke poetry on their plates:
Breakfast, dinner, shelter,
Your blood and bone weaver's hands racing
Quick around the table to satisfy each hunger
But your own. But now your granddaughter
Places these profound gifts in her journal
Where she will show the world how a mother
Forfeited her voice for those of her children,
How those voices dissipated in the heat
Of her children's children, and how this one
Voice that is mine lingers in the fog around
Us, the haze of communication. I am listening,
Grandmother. I have always listened.



Adam Lynch
Untitled
28" x 38"
Oil on Canvas

Waiting Room
Jennifer Roman

Waiting in a chair as hard as
a country church pew
meant to be welcoming for only an hour—
maybe two, if eternity is at hand.

A man in a white coat strolls into the open.
Everyone stiffens and listens,
only to hear the Coke machine suck up a dollar,
and spit out his energy for the early morning hours.

Maybe he'll take care of the lady
that just staggered in
with a red-blotted towel over her eye,
but she'll have to wait, just like the rest,

bare feet on a cold floor,
facing the wall-sized window
for everyone to sneak a peak
at the latest tragedy in town.

Her unbattered eye staring at something unseen
along with the other waiters,
making deals, and facing the facts
"I'll come to your funeral, if you come to mine."



Donavon Schmidt

Untitled

36" x 30"

Oil on Canvas

My Grandmother She puffed the chubby cigar
As we all sat and watched
Stefanie Connolly Smelling that familiar smell

She looked just like him
Clenching it between her teeth
With a half-cocked smile

All this to remember the
Indestructible man, now
In a 5x7 gray plastic box

We smell that sweet smell
And watch the smoke rise as
Amazing Grace plays in the background.



Adam Lynch
Untitled
4"x 6"
Photograph

Evergreen

Joshua Burdette

By the road, an old hemlock
stands like a scarecrow left up after harvest.
His splintered garb threatens no one,
his stick leg is thrust into the dirt.
His roots must have spread out wide around him
when he braced himself to stop the truck
with the two teenagers in it
from rolling into the meadow.
I wonder if his arms are tired now—
the way the ground pulls them down like icicles.
But his fingers still drip Christmas green
long after harvest.

Grandfather's Workbench

Darcie Davis

His hands—the color of burnt sienna—
have scarred and chipped knuckles,
which used to be young and still,
are now shaky and old.

Hands that are constantly grinding,
twisting, stripping, or mending something.
Hands that can break something with ease,
or with that same ease, restore it.

The bitter cold stinging his flesh now,
gloves would only be in the way—
hands don't know what a break feels like—
only the sweet success of the completed responsibility.

The smell of sparks from the burning steel,
or the shrieking sound of the grinding wheel,
what sounds harsh to the untrained ear,
is what brings comfort to his.



Dixie Holton

Untitled

32" x 42"

Oil on Canvas

Four Views from a Shoreline

Franklin Capps

An old wall with old windows
stood as longboats glided into the bay,
filled with Norsemen who intended to occupy
this small piece of land. These creek men
who spoke in strange syllabics
approached the coast and crossed the old wall
into the place where Gaelic was spoken
and bog fires burned even in the summer.

And the Romans eventually came
dressed well and with crooked noses.
They called this land the Winter Place
because it was so cold.
No warm baths or statues of generals
were built or raised like those in the south of England—
the cold storms rolling into Ulster
from out on the dark ocean stifled building.

The old wall stood as men left as soldiers
to travel to the Continent and fight
at someplace like the Somme
with Newfoundlanders, Scotsmen, and Englishmen
and some from other tribes,
only to be bogged down in bleeding France
dying calmly in filthy trenches
where invaders intended to occupy.

Those soldiers came home in the summer
and swam in the same bay where creek men
had come in years before.
Now the old wall watches as some young boys swim
in the same water where Romans and Norsemen
came onto shore.
The old windows see people walk about
and have conversations they will soon forget.
They see that there is water here;
there were men here; it has rained here.

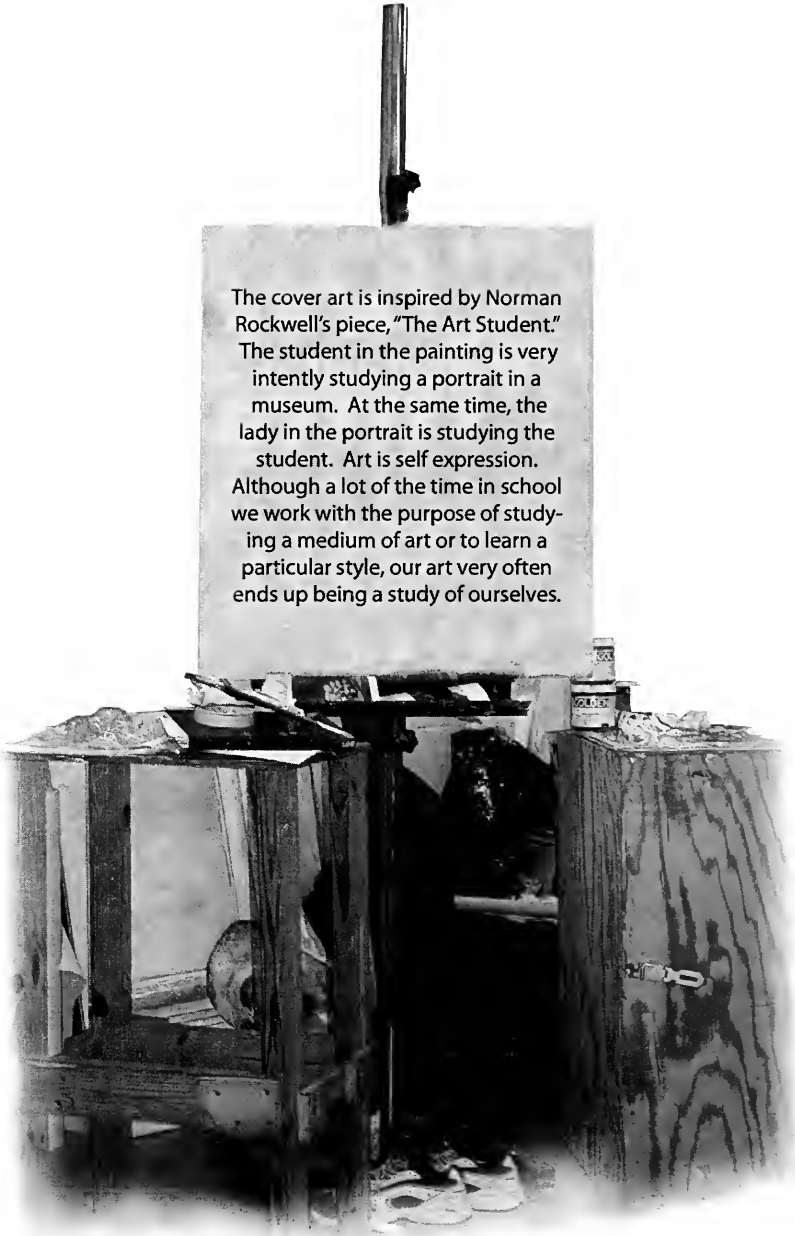


Kristy Eppolito

Moment

3"x4"

Photograph



The cover art is inspired by Norman Rockwell's piece, "The Art Student." The student in the painting is very intently studying a portrait in a museum. At the same time, the lady in the portrait is studying the student. Art is self expression. Although a lot of the time in school we work with the purpose of studying a medium of art or to learn a particular style, our art very often ends up being a study of ourselves.

